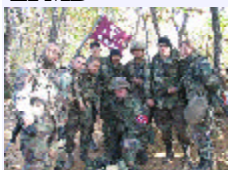


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EFMB



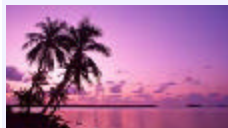
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(Left to Right) SPC Desrosiers, CPT Jefferson, and MAJ Galloway await the pinning on of their badge.

18th MEDCOM Soldiers earn Expert Field Medical Badge



18th Medical Command
Public Affairs Office

A four-man team transports a patient during the litter obstacle course. (Left to Right) CPT Neel Aziz, 106th Med. Det., SGT Adriana LaQue, 129th Med. Det., SFC Casey Kiernan, HHC 18th MEDCOM, and MAJ David Galloway, 129th Med. Det.

Warrior Base was the site of this year's Expert Field Medical Badge (EFMB) train-up and test from 17 OCT to 30 OCT. The EFMB symbolizes the highest level of proficiency for a Soldier/Medic. The badge design incorporates the Medical Corps branch insignia, modified by the addition of a Greek cross between the wings and the entwined serpents, signifies the recipient's skills and expertise. It is superimposed upon a stretcher alluding to medical field service.

Testing consists of eleven events the candidate must pass: APFT, CPR, land navigation, medical evacuation, litter/obstacle course, EMT, weapon qualification, CTT, COMMO, written test, and a 12 mile road march.

Of the over 200 participants, only 36 made it to the second to last event, the 100 question written test. "The written test was challenging. After two weeks of working in a tiring, physical demanding tactical environment, it was difficult to think during the test," said SFC Casey Kiernan from HHC 18th MEDCOM. Of the 36, only 19 made it to the road march. Refusing to let anything stand in their way, all 19 successfully finished the road march within the required three hours.

SFC Michael Prymula from the 121st General Hospital earned his EFMB last year and was a member of this year's test board. "The 18th MEDCOM folks really stuck together out there. Their unity was definitely a contributing factor to success."

CONGRATULATIONS to our newest EFMB recipients.

1LT Thompson	542nd Med. Co.
2LT Schultz	542nd Med. Co.
SFC Kiernan	HHC 18MC
SPC Trudden	168th ASMB
CPL Song	168th ASMB
CPT Wells	168th ASMB
PFC Betke	168th ASMB
SPC Desrosiers	168th ASMB
PFC Jo	154th Vet Det
1LT Trevino	16th MEDLOG
CPT Jefferson	106th Vet. Det.
MAJ Galloway	106th Vet. Det.

COLONEL BRIAN D. ALLGOOD, COMMANDER, 18th MEDICAL COMMAND



VISION

Our values driven team will be:

- Infused with the warrior spirit.
- A standard bearer within the Military Health Care System in the delivery of customer focused, quality health care and health protection across the full spectrum of operations.
- The model of medical force transformation – flexible, capable, and fully integrated with intraservice, interservice, and host nation assets.

What does this mean? It is definitely a collection of words, and by its very nature, subject to interpretation. That is why it is important that I take some time to communicate what it means to me... and how you should interpret it. It is imperative that we are all on the same sheet of music, and ultimately pulling on the same side of the rope.

We have a mission that tells us what we do. Our time and energy should be directed toward accomplishing that mission. As I stated in the command philosophy, your time, energy, and other resources should be directed toward mission accomplishment and moving us toward the vision... if it isn't, then it is not a proper application of that resource.

So, let's start at the top with "Our values driven team..." There are two key points contained in this statement. This is the foundation of how we accomplish everything we do. Our values are non-negotiable on how we live our life personally and professionally and they permeate the organization. The word team is equally important. The 18th MEDCOM is a team... a team of teams... and all that implies. We succeed together. No individual person or unit within the 18th MEDCOM is an island. Everyone's contribution and effort is important toward attaining our common goals.

Being infused with a Warrior Spirit means that we, collectively and individually, have the mental toughness and the confidence in our abilities so that we know- with absolute certainty- that we will overcome any obstacle placed in front of us and accomplish the mission. This holds true for missions across the spectrum of challenge- defeating the enemy on the battlefield, completing a physical challenge such as a run or a road march, meeting a short suspense, or completing a tasking. This mind set has to be present in each member and each organization in the command. This is only accomplished with your leadership and example.

We strive for excellence. We owe it to ourselves and our customers to do so. We don't want mediocrity- we want to set the standards for others to follow. We have to be customer focused... and we have a variety of customers. Obviously, our patients are our customers- but they are one subset. Commanders/ Commands, NCO leaders, soldiers, families and other members within the 18th MEDCOM are also our customers in different ways. We need to focus on identifying these customers' needs, whether it is services in a fixed facility or in support of combat operations. This is what this bullet attempts to get at- our bed rock is competency in delivery of quality health care, regardless of the environment. But that isn't all that it is - it is health protection of both the force and other beneficiaries. Proactive programs to educate commanders and individuals, protect via planning, surveillance, and prophylactic measures, and rapid, early intervention as needed... all designed to keep individuals healthy and formations ready to fight tonight. We have to constantly strive to reduce the gap between the way we conduct business during "Armistice Health Care" and "Transition to Hostilities" so that we don't have different skill sets or systems for each mission, but one set that is applicable to multiple missions. This is not only part of the "full spectrum of operations", but is also part of transforming the force.

We are in a time of opportunity to really shape the future and impact how we contribute to the overall mission of EUSA and USFK in the years to come. We have to be nested in the AMEDD and Army transformation to ensure that our formations are flexible and adaptable to not only continue to support deterrence on the peninsula and if necessary contribute to decisive defeat of the enemy, but agile enough to deploy as necessary. We have to think joint at every turn, actively look for ways to enhance the way we accomplish the mission with our own service's assets, but also with other services and our host nation in every problem we face and every decision we make as we shape the future.

Finally, this vision is applicable to the entire 18th MEDCOM. It doesn't matter if your area of focus is patient care (medical, dental, or veterinarian), evacuation, logistics, operations, personnel, preventive medicine, facilities, resource management... the list goes on... it doesn't matter, it is applicable. Think about your role as an individual and as a leader who will impact on where we are going, take it serious, and let's leave things in great standing so our soldiers and the 18th MEDCOM will continue to be successful and a relevant contributor in the future.

CSM RICARDO ALCANTARA COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, 18th MEDICAL COMMAND



I would like to welcome all the new Soldiers and their family that have been assigned to 18th MEDCOM, you should know you've been assigned to the best unit in USFK and to the assignment of choice in the Army (Korea). While your stay in Korea is short, get out and enjoy yourself, see the country and remember you are an ambassador of the U.S. Army.

I want everybody to stay focused on standards and discipline. Use your Army Values and Warrior ethos in all you do and be ready to "fight tonight". There is a lot of things happening in 18th MEDCOM, unit's are preparing for and returning from field exercises, stay focused, be safe. Remember most of our accidents, on the battlefield and at home, involve human error. Know your 5 steps of risk management.

Be cognizant of the curfew changes and a stronger presence of Courtesy Patrol while downtown, ensure you know the off limits establishments and keep alert to human trafficking and prostitution. Use the buddy system when going off of the installation. Keep accountability of your identification card at all times. With today's higher security, loss of ID cards are a threat to our force protection.

Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL) was a great success. All of the 18th MEDCOM units did an outstanding job and your hard work and training has paid off. Keep up the good work and carry that motivation to RSO&I. I would like to congratulate 16th MEDLOG for winning this past Dragon Challenge. Great Job! And commend all of our participants in the Expert Field Medical Badge (EFMB) competition; the badge represents the highest level of proficiency for a Soldier/Medic. Congratulations to those outstanding Soldiers who earned the badge.

I would like to welcome CSM Eddy the USA MEDCOM Command Sergeant Major, I hope you enjoy your stay in Korea and we look forward to your visit.

CH (LTC) LARRY LAWRENCE 121 ST GENERAL HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN



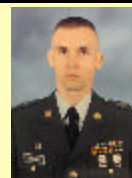
A beloved old physician was retiring in a little French village. He had labored among the villagers for decades. It was a poor village, so the mayor proposed that a keg be set up in the village square and that everyone should bring a pitcher of wine from his cellar to pour into the keg. Then they would present the keg to the doctor as an expression of their good will for all he had done for them.

On the appointed day, a steady stream of people brought pitchers of wine to pour into the keg. That evening a presentation was made to the good doctor, and he took the keg home with him. Not long afterwards, as he sat near his fireplace, he decided to have a glass of wine. He drew a glass from the keg and took a sip. He nearly choked from the taste. He drew another glass to be sure, but it had the same awful taste! Confused, he returned the keg to the townspeople. The mayor was understandably upset, and he called for a town meeting to see what had happened. Much to his disgust, and the town's embarrassment, it was discovered that every family had brought water to pour into the keg, thinking it would never be noticed since everyone else was bringing wine.

Are you contributing your best? Or are you merely supplying water, hoping that nobody will notice it among all the wine? Don't just work; work at doing your best.

NCO of theQuarter

SGT Jeffrey Tinsman
Health Care NCO
C Co., 168th Med. Bn.



Soldier of the Quarter

SPC Nicholas Jameson
Health Care Spec.
568th Med. Co., 52nd Evac. Bn

KATUSA of theQuarter

CPL Sang-Bi Park
Medical Logistics Spec.
A Co., 16th MEDLOG



*** CONGRATULATIONS ***



APO AP 96205

121st GH Wrapping up Phase I of state-of-the-art renovation

By
Rebecca Hayes
121 Transition Office

An architectural design model of the renovated 121st General Hospital.

Photo by 2LT Kelly Seiber

If you have driven or walked by the 121st General Hospital, it's hard not to notice the construction going on. The contractor, Dong Bu Corporation, a Korean firm, is completing the construction in accordance with U.S. healthcare facility standards. While we try to minimize the impact to ongoing healthcare, you may have seen some evidence of construction on the inside of the hospital. The 121st General Hospital, US Army Health Facility Planning Agency and Far East District Corps of Engineers are all working hard to ensure continuous access to care for our beneficiaries while ensuring progress toward project completion.

Phase 1 of the \$114 million renewal program for the Hospital, is well on its way to completion. This phase of construction will add approximately 125,000 square feet to the 121. Phases 2 and 3 will involve multiple moves within the current hospital to facilitate demolition and renovation over the next several years.

Phase 1 provides new parking, main entry, expanded waiting and reception areas, Command Suite, Behavioral Health Clinic, Dining Facility and Kitchen, Surgical Suites, Intensive Care Unit, Patient Administration, Information Desk, American Red Cross and Patient Representative Offices, Medical Library, Pastoral Care/Chapel, Ambulatory and Pediatric Care Clinics, Occupational Therapy, Oral Surgery, Special Procedures Unit,



Post-anesthesia Care Unit, Central Material Service and Logistics. Their functions are organized to efficiently deliver healthcare in a pleasing environment.

The project leverages technology to bring state-of-the-art construction and equipment to the 121st General Hospital. New emergency generators were installed in a previous phase. One of the most important aspects in Phase 1 of the renovation is the renewal of the building systems to support the new and existing hospital. A new central utility plant will save the Army money on utility costs by improving heating and cooling efficiency.

In Phase 2, a Computed Tomography suite, currently located in a trailer adjacent to the Emergency Room, will be constructed within the Radiology Department. Digital x-ray upgrades will allow healthcare providers to view enhanced resolution clinical images from their exam rooms and offices.

Hospitalized patients will be able to view religious services broadcast from the Hospital Chapel through a closed circuit television system. Modern communication and data lines will better support clinical and administrative processes.

While implementing Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection standards, the hospital also incorporates the latest medical design and space planning criteria.

Beneficiaries will be pleased to see many new quality of life features included in their facility. An Asian Garden, an outdoor space enclosed on four sides by the hospital and open to the sky, will provide a pleasing relaxing environment for visitors and staff. In addition, a small covered area adjacent to the dining facility will provide a space for outdoor dining.

A bit of the old will carry over into the new with the installation of four stained glass windows from the original chapel. The AAFES Barber Shop and Shoppette relocate to the new medical "mall," a large, open waiting and reception corridor with skylights and artwork.

A kiosk, located in the main

lobby, will provide directional maps for way-finding and information on a variety of healthcare topics, including websites on Department of Defense Medicine, self-care and drug information.

The staff of the 121 appreciates your patience as we work toward providing your new healthcare facility for the future! ■



The Ambulatory Care/Pediatric Clinic reception desk.

Photo by Ms. Cathy Han

Renovation Quick Facts

-Bricks used in construction:
12,000

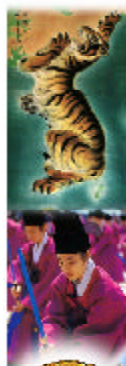
-Weight of blast doors:
800lbs each

-Length of CAT 6 Cable used for new hospital LAN:
35 Miles

-Operating Room square footage:
Current Facility = 392
New Facility = 596

-Number of floor tiles used:
Approx. 65,000

ASSIGNMENT: KOREA



Whether this is your first tour or you are nearing retirement, Korea offers a wealth of opportunity to have a good time. We've all heard, "Don't be a barracks rat, get out and enjoy the country" and it's true. Usually our first experiences in Korea are venturing right outside the gate, but you'll soon enough realize there is more to Korea than Itaewon.

The "Assignment of Choice" really is what you make it. If you like to travel, you could not be better positioned to visit many of the "Hot Spots" in Asia and the South Pacific. Check with your local USO or MWR office for travel opportunities.

Do you like to eat? Koreans are very proud of their

foods, with specialties like Kimchi and Bulgogi, you can count on a satisfied palette. OK, maybe you're a fitness nut. Taekwondo classes will get you sweating or how about a good long hike through the mountains. Don't forget snow skiing in the winter.

Did you join for the education benefits? Check out the university class offerings at your local education office. Many offer traditional college courses as well as Korean language and history classes.

Whatever your interests, you will find good times during your tour....if you look.



What can folks new to Korea do to enjoy their tour?



SGT Sean Francis
42A, HHC 18th MEDCOM
Miami, Florida

Get to know the KATUSAs in your unit. Learn the language and try to foster great friendship.



MAJ Roger Giraud
70H, 121st General Hospital
San Antonio, Republic of Texas

Go on the DMZ tour and understand why we are here in the Republic of Korea. It helps one to understand the fragile armistice that we are sustaining and the sacrifices that continue to be made by both U.S. and ROK Soldiers on a daily basis.



Rebecca Hayes
121 Renovation Office
Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Get out and explore what Korea has to offer. Don't be afraid to submerge yourself in the culture. For instance, hiking is one of the most popular things to do. You can escape the cement jungle and it's only a subway ride away.



CPT Tyquese Pratt-Chambers
70F, HHD 52nd Evac. Battalion
Detroit, Michigan

Involve yourself in your unit's Community Relations events. Activities range from working with orphans to cleaning up a park. You can experience a new culture while lending a helping hand.



SSG(P) Bradley Reynolds
91R, HHC 18th MEDCOM
Gardner, Kansas

Take the KTX train to Busan and spend the weekend and enjoy the beaches, historical temples like Yonggung Temple and hiking or riding a Kumgang Cable Car to Geumjeongsan Fortress, and many other activities.



SPC Sheena Santiago
91E, 618th Dental Co.
New York City, New York

I enjoyed my trip to Jeju Do Island. It was a very relaxing vacation. There are many nice hotels and lots of things to do. The island reminded me of Florida.



SGT Jose Flores
92Y, 106th Med. Det. (VS)
Caguas, Puerto Rico

Our unit went hiking at Do Bong San Mountain, it was a long haul, but it was the best thing I've done. The views were great and it was nice to breathe the fresh air. Go hiking!



1LT Kerri Graves
70B, 121st General Hospital
Liberty, Michigan

A tour in Korea is a wonderful opportunity to travel within Asia. Go to China and stand on the Great Wall.



SFC Dennis Feeney
91T, 129th Med. Det. (VM)
Dubuque, Iowa

Take a Korean language class, learn enough to read the signs. Don't leave Korea without trying the food.



SGT Anna Drca
91W, B Co., 168th Med. Bn.
Spokane, Washington

One of the best memories of my time in Korea is when a group of us went ice skating at Lotte World. Afterwards we went to Carne Station, a restaurant nearby where it's all-you-can-eat and drink.

BARRACKS LAWYER

DISCLAIMER: THE BARRACKS LAWYER TRIES TO GIVE CREDIBLE AND ACCURATE INFORMATION BASED ON MILITARY LITERATURE AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE. THE BARRACKS LAWYER HAS NEVER ATTENDED LAW SCHOOL NOR DOES HE CLAIM TO BE AN EXPERT IN JURISPRUDENCE AND CAN NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR ACTIONS.



Dear Barracks Lawyer,

I'm a 20 year old soldier stationed her in Korea, so you can probably predict the nature of my question. Can you explain the new USFK drinking policy? Can I drink off post still? -sincerely

PFC "Thirsty" Smith

Dear Thirsty,

As of 01 NOV 04, the new drinking age for USFK Servicemembers, government civilians, contractors and dependents is 21....period. If you are punishable under the UCMJ and you are under 21 and you drink, purchase or possess alcoholic beverages on or off post you will be punished.

-BL

Dear BL,

Will I get in trouble if I start selling clothes and jerseys and other good stuff I get in Osan to people on eBay? It's not like I will be sending huge amounts back to the states.

-Richie "The Retailer"

Dear Richie,

If your "wares" are counterfeit exporting them to the States will be a violation of too many federal laws to list here. OK, you say your product is not counterfeit, nor does it infringe on anyone's copyright. According to DOD 4525.6-M you cannot use the military postal service to operate a business, so that's your second "stop sign". Let's say you send your goods FedEx, unless you've contacted U.S. Customs, filled out the appropriate forms and paid the due export taxes you are smuggling and breaking the law. Please contact your local Post Office and Customs officials for further information.

-BL

Send your questions to the Barracks Lawyer:
18th MEDCOM Public Affairs
EAMC-PAO, Unit 15281
APO AP 96205

On the 16th of September 2004, the 121st General Hospital hosted the Civilian Appreciation Week Award Ceremony. Congratulations the the following awardees:

KN TECHNICAL EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

Ms. CHANG, In Kyong
Department of Pathology, 121st GH

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE US ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT REGIMENT & CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

COL (RET) KOO, Ja Oaek

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD

45 YRS

Ms. KIM, Su Cha
Accounting Technician
Dept. of Nutrition Care, 121st GH

30 YRS

Ms. KIM, Chong Cha
Office Support Assistant (OA)
SGS, 18th MEDCOM

Ms. KU, Cha Sun
Custodial Worker
Logistic Division, 121st GH

10 YRS

Mr. YI, Chong Su
Custodial Worker
Logistics Division, 121st GH

25 YRS

Mr. HAM, Nung T.
Engineer Technician
DCSFAC, 18th MEDCOM

Ms. KWON, Kyong Im
Medical Records Technician
168th Medical Battalion

Mr. KIM, Chang Sik
Supply Technician
16th Medical Battalion

15 YRS

Ms. KIM, Myong Hui
Accounting Technician
UBO, 18th MEDCOM

DESTINATIONS - GUAM

Only a 3 hour flight from Korea, Guam is a terrific destination for beautiful beaches and natural scenery. Visitors can shop at quality boutiques, one of the busiest K-mart's in the world, or at Chamorro Village, an open-air market where local collectibles are sold. Restaurant dining options remind you of home—including Planet Hollywood, the Hard Rock Café, Friday's, Outback Steakhouse, and others. See the famous Latte Stones, World War II sites, or Two-Lovers Point on a circle tour of the island. The dry season is January to June and the weather is warm year round. Hotel chains near Tumon Bay include the Marriott, the Hyatt, and a favorite – the Outrigger! Contact the USO for more information at: DSN 724-3301 or 724-7781.



18th MEDCOM HOLIDAY BALL

CAPITAL HOTEL
17 DEC 04
1700 hrs.

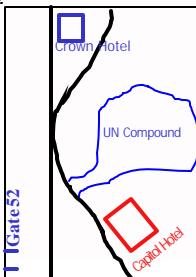
HOLIDAY BALL IS FOR ALL 18th
MEDCOM PERSONNEL AND
SPOUSE/GUEST

ATTIRE: DRESS MESS, BLUES, Class
A OR FORMAL SUIT AND/OR
EVENING GOWN

18TH MEDCOM UNIT REPS

HHC, 18th	ISG Patterson
121st GH	SSG Johnson
168th MED BN	SFC Sharp
618th DEN BN	SSG Verhassalt
16th MED LOG	SSG Holland
52nd EVAC	SFC Ervin
106th VET	ISG Nash
38th Med	CPT Luna

1700-1800 Social	1800-1900 Holiday Ball Commence
1900-2000 Dinner	2000-2100 Entertainment & Prizes
2130 Closing	2200-0100 Dancing



DEERS address change

People registered in the Defense Eligibility Enrollment Reporting System, more commonly known as DEERS, are responsible for changing essential information when moving.

DEERS is a computerized database of military sponsors, families and others worldwide who are entitled under the law to TRICARE benefits. DEERS registration is required for TRICARE eligibility.

Enrollees who live part of the year in one location and move to another location the rest of the year must change addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses every time they move. Families who decide to transfer their TRICARE benefit should also change their DEERS information.

For example, a family that plans to return home for six months while the spouse is deployed will need routine health care at the "home" location and needs to transfer TRICARE and change DEERS information.

The easiest way to update the DEERS information is to go to <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>, and click on "DEERS" to the bottom right of the web page. It will take you directly to the Address Change Option in DEERS.

Enrollment forms to transfer TRICARE benefits are also located on the website above.

Or enrollees may go to <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/>, click on "DoD Community," then "Personnel Services," then "DEERS Address Update System," and "Personal Information," and fill in the new information.

Enrollees may also call the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office at 1-800-538-9552, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Eastern Time, Wednesdays through Fridays. ■

Health impacts productivity

by Ms. Carlla Jones, Ms. Marcie Birk and Ms. Kate Neufeld
U.S. Army Center for Health
Promotion and Preventive Medicine



The impact of poor health on workplace productivity is often only measured in terms of days absent from work or missed training time. Improving health is seen as valuable because good health increases the amount of time a Soldier is able to be on duty. However, this is only one side of the issue. The other point to consider is: how does health impact productivity while on duty?

Absenteeism is a well-recognized consequence of less-than-optimal health. However, decreased health also causes "presenteeism." Presenteeism is being on duty but not performing at full capacity. Presenteeism is of special concern to the military because military missions are dependent upon optimal levels of performance while on duty.

Military duties require Soldiers to operate at peak levels of physical and mental capacity, and without injury. This level of performance must especially be sustained during times of deployment. World events have accelerated the rate of deployments for Active Duty, Reserve, and National Guard personnel. While force readiness is always critical, the current high level of military operations makes readiness more important now than perhaps ever before.

There are many health factors that can influence force readiness including tobacco use, high levels of stress, and work-related injuries that reduce the effectiveness of Soldiers while on duty. These risk factors, however, take on additional significance when considered in light of the unique demands of military missions. For example, tobacco use impairs night vision and coordination. Also, the effects

of poorly managed stress such as insomnia, fatigue, and anxiety have obvious consequences for safety. Ultimately, all these factors affect mission accomplishment.

A new approach to examining the connection between health and on-duty performance is called Health and Productivity Management (HPM). HPM integrates wellness and prevention; chronic-disease management; occupational health and safety; disability management; and organizational health. This integrative approach addresses presenteeism by considering healthy Soldiers as a force asset.

The goal of HPM is to increase performance while on duty by reducing health concerns, to decrease unnecessary time away from duty overall, and minimize total health-related costs, including medical expenses. HPM can be used to identify and deliver services that enhance the performance of our Soldiers. Health is a primary factor in efficient and effective performance. A healthy force is a ready force.

In order for the U.S. military to maintain force readiness, healthy Service members and civilians must continue to be considered a force asset for the 21st century. HPM can be adapted for use in a military environment in order to maximize force readiness and on-duty productivity. HPM is a valuable link between force readiness, force health, and mission accomplishment.

For more information on Health and Productivity Management, go to <http://www.ihpm.org/>. ■

Benefits of stopping tobacco use

by Dr. Virginia Yates
Martin Army Community Hospital, Fort Benning, Ga.

Every year, millions of people set New Year's resolutions to live healthier lifestyles. One of the biggest challenges in pursuing this goal is quitting smoking.

If the overwhelming risks for heart attacks, strokes, many types of cancer and lung disease are not enough to make a person quit, perhaps know the positive effects of stopping will help provide an

incentive. The American Cancer Society, in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has compiled the following description of the events in a smoker's body that begin within minutes of quitting.

Within 20 minutes after quitting smoking, the blood pressure and heart rate drop closer to normal, and temperature of the hands and feet increases to normal.

By eight hours after quitting, the level of oxygen in the blood increases closer to normal and the level of poisonous carbon monoxide in the blood lessens.

By 48 hours after quitting, the nerve endings begin new growth and the senses of taste and smell improve.

During the next one to nine months, coughing, sinus congestion and shortness of breath start to improve. The body has little sweepers called "cilia" in lung passages that clean away germs and dust. These are damaged by smoking. These begin to regrow during this time, reducing the risk of infections.

One year after quitting, a former smoker has cut the risk of heart disease by nearly one half what it was when smoking. Five years after quitting, when compared to a smoker, former smokers have cut their risk of lung, mouth, throat, and esophagus cancers by nearly half. In 5 to 15 years, the former smoker will have the same risk for stroke as someone that never smoked.

Ten years after quitting, rates for lung cancer are similar for former smokers and those who have never smoked.

Fifteen years after quitting, the former smoker has the same risk for heart disease as the person who has never smoked. ■

